



# The Megiddo Message

*Devoted to the Cause of Christ*

The Man of Genesis Receives Dominion

CHRIST: The Personal, Spiritual and Multitudinous

THE DIVINE WHISPER—DO IT BETTER

DISTILLED POWER

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

BEYOND MOTH, RUST AND ROBBER

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THE CROWN OF LIFE

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# THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

May 21, 1955

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## The Man of Genesis Receives Dominion

**I**N THE LAST ARTICLE of our series on *The First Three Chapters of Genesis* we discussed the man made in God's image: who he is and how he is made. We proved from the Scriptures that he is not the natural man but rather a multitudinous body composed of Christ and the Church. The process of his creation which has three steps (becoming mentally, morally and physically like his Maker), we found to be outlined in Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." When at Christ's return the Church is judged worthy and the third step of creation is completed by the change from mortality to immortality, then the next phase of Genesis 1:26 shall be fulfilled: "Let them have dominion."

It is this yearning desire for immortality and dominion which impels the Church throughout a long and arduous probationary period to fashion a character so far superior to that of the natural man that not a flaw or blemish is discernible to God's all-penetrating eye (Ephesians 5:27).

### Dominion — A Bible Promise

The promise of future dominion as introduced in Genesis is repeated and amplified numerous times throughout the Scriptures. In one of Jesus' parables which depicts the final Day of Reckoning, the Judge is represented as saying to a loyal steward, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21). Herein lies the recompense for fidelity to God now: it assures future rulership.

Again in Daniel 7:27 is recorded the promise of dominion. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Several facts are here established. First: The *territory* of the multitudinous man's dominion is to be "under the whole heaven." Despite theologians' conception—

"With Thee we'll reign, with Thee we'll rise,  
And kingdoms gain beyond the skies"—

the Book teaches that the man made in the image of God will reign "under the whole heaven," on earth; not in the skies or "beyond" the skies. This harmonizes with the Revelator's report of the song of the redeemed: "Thou . . . hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9, 10).

Further, Daniel 7:27 informs us of the *duration* of this man's dominion: "Whose kingdom is an *everlasting* kingdom." When this multitudinous man has performed the most stupendous feat of which mortals are capable—that of ruling and governing self—he shall be granted supremacy over the nations of earth forever. And unlike the kings and potentates of today, having first conquered self he will be competent for the position.

It is made very plain by the Revelator that the promise of future dominion is extended to none but the overcomers. Jesus' personal promise is, "He that overcometh, and

keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. . . . To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 2:26; 3:21).

### Dominion Over Beasts

The evidence which we have canvassed shows that the man of Genesis is to exercise dominion over the nations of earth. How can this be harmonized with the allegory which states, "Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth"? Artists conceive this to signify that the wildest and most ferocious beasts of the animal kingdom—the lion, the bear, the wolf—shall in the future become so docile as to submit to the leading of a little child. Again that Utopian state is represented by a beautiful garden in which a happy child is caressing the king of beasts, now grown meek and mild as a lamb.

It is to be hoped that better things are in store for the saints of God than educating lions, or charming snakes, or taming wolves, or exercising supremacy over weasels and woodchucks. How ridiculous it would be to assume that men and women of intelligence could be impelled to live the sacrificial life with no stronger incentive than future dominion over the animal creation! A nobler incentive than this is necessarily provided. Since the man of Genesis 1:26 is representative, the beasts are likewise symbolic.

In the Bible people are called such animals as their nature suggests, whether good or bad; and, indeed, no more expressive means of describing human nature could have been employed. By reason of his intellect, man is a step above the beast. But when he abuses his powers of mind and his powers of will to restrain irregular passions, he sinks to the level of the beast, and—sadly—ofttimes below. It is common parlance to refer to the stubborn person as being mulish; the filthy and sensual as swinelike; the brawny, muscular man is said to have the strength of an ox.

We find the same usages in the Scriptures. Men and women of a gentle, yielding disposition are likened to sheep. Others who imitate the craft and subtlety of serpents are thus designated. A brief survey of Bible animals will aid in defining those of Genesis.

**FOXES:** Jesus said of the sly and wicked Herod, "Go ye, and tell that fox. . . ." (Luke 13:32). The false prophets of Israel were like "foxes in the deserts" (Ezek. 13:4, 6).

**WOLVES:** Jesus warned against "false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15)—fierce, destructive, yet cloaking their hostile intention with a hypocritical, friendly manner. Paul prophesied of "grievous wolves" who would make havoc of the Lord's true flock until the Apostasy should be complete (Acts 20:29, 30).

**LIONS:** The Psalmist was among "lions," "even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (Ps. 57:4).



**SERPENTS:** The scribes and Pharisees were rightly pronounced "serpents," a "generation of vipers" (Matt. 3:7).

**DOGS:** "Dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me" (Ps. 22:16). False teachers are "dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, . . . greedy dogs" (Isa. 56:10, 11). Within the gold-paved street City of God no dogs shall be found; all are "without" (Rev. 22:15).

**FISH:** Jesus called the Apostles to be "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19).

**SHEEP:** At Judgment the sheep shall be invited to the right, the goats (wanderers) banished to the left (Matt. 25:31-33).

**FLOCKS:** "Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 34:31).

When the man of Genesis is created in the mental, moral and physical likeness of God, he is ready for world-wide dominion over fish, fowl, cattle and creeping things. However, many evil beasts which roam the earth today—men and women possessed of the baser animal instincts—would never come into subjection to Christ and the saints. Such are to be eliminated at the onset, as we read in Ezek. 34:25, "I . . . will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land." The destruction of the evil beasts is accomplished by means of the Battle of Armageddon. The beasts which remain must be tamed, brought into subjection to divine law (Hos. 2:18). So rigidly will the law be enforced that no open manifestation of evil will be permitted. Wrangling between individuals and nations, the moral depredation which is the curse of this present age, will belong to the forgotten past.

A beautiful description of the future dominion of Christ and the saints over the nations is found in Isaiah 11:4-9. "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." All the subjects of the Kingdom, whether formerly known as wolves, lions or bears, shall be so transformed in nature as to live peaceably, happily, holily, brother with brother.

"And a little child shall lead them," young in the immortal life, yet full grown in the Christian graces—the man of Genesis 1:26.

What immeasurable exaltation is set before us poor creatures of clay! What loftiness of position to aspire to! What heights of supremacy to waken and stir every noble impulse within the believer's breast! By virtue of a righteous life we can ascend from the dust of mortality to scale the heights of power, glory, might, dominion in a world without end. The promise is as old as the plan of God, as certain as His very existence.

Thoughts such as these had overwhelmed the mind of David when, musing upon his own speck-worthlessness, he was led to exclaim, "When I consider thy heavens, the

work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" What is man? But a mass of corruption! Yet the singer of Israel knew of man's potentialities (the multitudinous man to be made in the image of God), and answered his own query. Speaking in the past tense of things yet future, he said, "Thou . . . hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." In reverential awe he concluded, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Ps. 8:3-9). How excellent indeed is such a Creator who will look upon man in his lowly estate and condescend to share with him the dominion of the universe!

Hebrews 2 repeats this same text and sustains the hope that "all things" shall one day be put in subjection under the feet of the man made in God's image. Indeed it is this very promise that has enabled the faithful of the ages to hold a straight course amid devious desires, to put all things of a carnal, earthly, sensual nature under their feet, exercising absolute self-mastery, that in the eternity to come they might rule the world in righteousness.

Then the man of Genesis—"very good" in his ultimate state—shall have dominion "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. . . . Yes, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Psalm 72:8, 11).

The tenth of our Series on *The First Three Chapters of Genesis* will appear under the topic,

ADAM AND EVE.

## BEYOND MOTH, RUST AND ROBBER

"**L**AY not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matt. 6:19-21).

The literal moth and rust and thieves cause grief enough, to be sure; but let us consider the greater lesson couched in these lines. How many times people have carefully and painstakingly stored their treasure in the attainment of success or some other goal; and, after long and diligent effort, upon the desired occasion have opened their chest to find their treasured garments of ambition rotting in decay, consumed as a moth-eaten robe by the moths of adversity, accident, violence, financial losses, war, change of circumstances, or other destructive forces beyond their help and for which they had no spray! Others, with strong confidence, went to their treasure vault in the hour of need, and lo! thieves had been there first! Yes, change, disease, death or decay had stolen that which they held dearest and cherished with fond affection. Indeed, the instances of the vanity of earthly treasures are as numerous and common as a moth-eaten garment, rusted and cankered metal or the robbery recorded on the front page of every newspaper.

Is it any wonder that the Preacher said, "Vanity of vanities, . . . all is vanity." Is it not Wisdom's voice calling and instructing us to labor for those riches which

(Continued on page 9)

# Christ: The Personal, Spiritual and Multitudinous

## *Did the Personal Christ Exist Before His Birth?*

**I**T WILL BE PROFITABLE to refresh our minds on the different features of this subject. If members of the "household of God" we learn in Eph. 2: 19, 20 that we "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Not for a moment do we conceive of this as a literal foundation, that we are built upon the bodies of the Apostles and Prophets, with the literal Jesus the corner stone; but we understand the foundation to be the Truth as expressed in their teachings, which comprises the spiritual foundation upon which every true believer is built into a holy temple.

A subscriber writes: "I certainly do enjoy reading THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE and the books written by the Rev. L. T. Nichols, as they bring many new truths to my mind which doubtless I would have failed to see if not for these helps; yet there are some things I see in a different light. I find in reading your literature that it does not coincide with the idea I have always believed, that Christ was with God the Father from the beginning. I would be pleased to have you harmonize John 1: 1—5 also ch. 17: 3, 5."

In order to understand this subject and how rightly to divide the word of truth, we must learn the mind of the Spirit by complying with the rule given in I Cor. 2: 13, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," remembering that man's wisdom inclines to compare natural with natural.

It is a common mistake to think that whenever "Christ" is mentioned in the Bible it always is in reference to the personal Christ. True, there is "the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2: 5) who was born in Bethlehem of Judea; then there is the spiritual Christ—the Word, Wisdom, Truth; also there is the multitudinous Christ composed of Christ the Head and the Church His body (Col. 1: 18) who stand with Him on Mount Zion after the Judgment. We must learn to distinguish by the context, which is meant.

### The Personal Christ

The Divine evidence is specific that there was a personal Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary, and that His birth was foretold by the Angel Gabriel in Luke 1: 31, 32. The Prophet Isaiah (7: 14) also could herald His birth many years prior to the fulfillment: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Could this Child who was "born of a woman" have existed before the material from which He was made existed? Impossible! Nor could He have been as old as His Father. Was He born with all knowledge? No! "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good" (Isa. 7: 15)—ah! we see there was a time when He did not know to refuse the evil and choose the good—He had to learn to have His senses exercised. At twelve years of age He had not yet learned it completely, as we read in Luke 2: 42—51, for at His mother's reproof He returned home and was subject unto His parents. At the age of twelve His relation to the Law was changed, and being a Child of destiny He thought it time to be about His Father's business; however, when it was shown Him that there was a discipline for Him to pass through, a character to be formed, He meekly surrendered His will and obeyed.

In Acts 1: 9—11 we learn that after Jesus had perfected His character and finished His ministry He ascended to the Father, and the angels told the sorrowing disciples: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Thus we can know that the real, personal Jesus born of the Virgin Mary, the One who lived on this earth for thirty-three years and left a righteous example for His followers, was borne by the angels to the Most Holy Place; and "this same Jesus" shall come again, a real, personal, immortal being.

### The Nature of Christ

We have only one message from the dead, from One who passed through the death state and by a glorious resurrection gained the life that shall never end; and that One was Jesus Christ. Recorded in the last message, the one sent to John on Patmos, are the words of Rev. 1: 18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." This Jesus, who had passed through death and gained the victory over the grave, was so anxious to impart to His people some of the wonderful knowledge He had gained in Heaven, that He came back and appeared to Paul, one who would later become the greatest of the Apostles, and commissioned him to make plain what His nature was.

So in Heb. 5: 7—9 this Apostle says of Jesus: "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." We thus learn that He was flesh and blood; that He worked out His salvation in the days of His flesh and was made perfect through obedience, just as each member of His body the Church must do by following His example.

The creeds teach that Christ was born immaculate and equal to God; but we prefer to believe the words of Jesus Himself rather than all the man-made creeds in the world. He said in John 14: 28 and 5: 30, "My Father is greater than I . . . I can of mine own self do nothing." The Apostle says of Him, in Heb. 2: 9, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." How many natures are there? We may search all through the Bible, and can find there are only two: the mortal, and the immortal. What is the mortal? That which is subject to death. And what is the immortal? That which is not subject to death. Jesus explains in Luke 20: 35, 36 that "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain" the resurrection from the dead, shall be made "equal unto the angels," *neither can they die any more*. What a promise! This is proof that angels are immortal beings; and as Jesus was made lower than the angels, we can know that He was mortal. He could never have been a proper example to erring mortals unless His nature had been the same as theirs.

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." How was He made? *In all things like unto His brethren*. "For in that he himself hath suf-



ferred being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:17, 18). We never read of immortal beings being tempted; but Christ, being mortal, was tempted in all ways as were His brethren. This is sound doctrine. Paul foretold in II Tim. 4:3, 4 that the time would come when the masses would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts would "heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." And II Pet. 2:1 (Weymouth) says: "There will be teachers of falsehood among you also, who will cunningly introduce fatal heresies."

#### The Truth Called Christ

The Word of Truth is also called Christ, and that has existed throughout an endless eternity. The Apostle Paul declared in I Cor. 10:1—4 that under Moses' leadership the fathers "did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." That spiritual meat and drink, the Truth of the living God, is Christ—a spiritual Christ. Throughout past ages the people of God have partaken of this spiritual meat and spiritual drink, the Word of Jehovah. It is clearly expressed in Col. 1:27, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This Word, this Christ, the knowledge of God, is the "true bread from heaven."

When acquiring a knowledge of algebra, geometry, or other branches of learning, the student must keep in mind the rules governing each particular science if he would succeed. And thus we find it in the study of the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul gives this greatest of all rules: that this *spiritual meat and this spiritual drink is Christ*. And that this Truth is personified and called "he," "me," and "she," we learn in Proverbs 8 and other scriptures.

When we comprehend that the name "Christ" means "the truth, the anointing oil," a flood of light pours in. Jesus was called Christ because full of truth; He was called Light because He suffered no darkness or error to dwell within. Therefore He became in that sense a part of the Truth, the embodiment of it. But the Christ, Melchisedec, the wisdom of God which existed from the very beginning, had "neither beginning of days, nor end of life." Yet as it was in the days of Paul, so now, it is difficult for many to have ears to hear these deep sayings of God, because they "are dull of hearing." The trouble is, the natural mind is bent on comparing natural with natural, and not, as commanded, "spiritual things with spiritual."

#### How Was Jesus Sent From God?

Jesus said in John 7:29, referring to Jehovah, "But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me." Again in ch. 8:42, "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." These scriptures convey the same idea. God sent Jesus; but that does not mean that He existed before He was born of the Virgin or that He came down from Heaven. For instance: In John 17:18 Jesus prayed to the Father: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." If we understand how Jesus sent His Apostles into the world, we can plainly see how God sent Jesus into the world. This covers verse 3 also.

Upon the same principle is the language of Joshua (24:5), "I sent Moses also and Aaron." In Jer. 7:25 the Lord says, "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have sent

unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them." The Prophets did not exist before they were born, neither did they come down from Heaven. Further in John 1:6 we are told: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." Elisabeth was his mother, and he was born in Palestine; yet no one thinks of claiming that he preexisted and came down from Heaven. Anything God ordains or commands is said to come from Heaven; while man's thoughts are of the "earth, earthy." It is as Jesus said to His opposers: "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" (Luke 20:4). This simply meant: Did God command it, or was it of men?

#### Was Jesus with the Father from the Beginning?

We will quote the first of John's Gospel from Prof. Goodspeed's translation: "In the beginning the Word existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was divine." Now we shall give Dr. Moffatt's rendering, as both are good: "The Logos existed in the very beginning, the Logos was with God, the Logos was divine." The Greek Lexicon defines "Logos" as follows: "The word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed . . . i. e. *language, talk . . . a word*, (in a fuller sense) *a sentence, proposition . . . a saying, statement, a discourse . . . the power of the mind which is manifested in speech, reason*."

A greater fable was never proclaimed than that Logos ever meant an individual, a person. The word has no such definition.

John 1:1 is in perfect harmony with Prov. 8:22, 23, concerning wisdom. The Word, the Logos, was in the beginning with God, as was also Wisdom. In a Bible sense it can only mean that the wisdom and knowledge of God has always existed. However, in John 1 it has special reference to the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the proclamation of the Word through Jesus; not the truth proclaimed six thousand years ago or in any other age, but was that Logos heralded by the One of whom Moses foretold in Deut. 18:18, "I will raise them up a Prophet . . . and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." That this was fulfilled by Jesus was verified by Peter at Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 3:20—22. In John 5:46, 47 Jesus said to the Jews: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Although Jesus was born of a Virgin by a law higher than known to man, it did not change His nature; for "in all things" He was "made like unto his brethren."

Now we shall continue in John 1:2—5. "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." What "all things" does this embrace? All things of "the world to come," not of this mundane system but all things of the spiritual creation. Again we ask: What was in the beginning with God? The word of wisdom by which all things were created and governed. Here wisdom is personified, as in verse 3, "All things were made by him." This is the "me" of Prov. 8:22, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." This is a plain case of personification. Wisdom is represented as having a mouth, and speaking.

In John 1:4 we find "in him was life." What "him" will give life? The answer is in Prov. 8:35, "For whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth life." This is confirmed in

Ecc. 7: 12, "For wisdom is a defense, and money is a defense; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." What is the light that shines in darkness and the darkness comprehends it not? Psalm 119: 105, 130 tells us: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. . . . The entrance of thy words giveth life; it giveth understanding unto the simple," those who will receive it.

In II Peter 1: 19 the Apostle specifies what this light is that shines in darkness: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." This is the Word of Jehovah that is surrounded by darkness, which the children of this world will not receive, but it is a light to all who heed its leading.

#### How Was Christ the Light?

Just as He said to His disciples: "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5: 14); because they had the light of His Word as a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." How may we understand this saying? We know that not every one of this present evil world is enlightened, for Jesus said to the unbelievers in His day, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8: 47). Those who refused to hear His words were not enlightened. The qualifying term for verse 9 is found in Heb. 2: 5, "the world to come, whereof we speak." The wondrous Truth enlightens every one who becomes a part of "the world to come"—not of this present evil world, those who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

Let us now read verse 14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." As Paul expressed it: the "word of promise" was fulfilled by Jesus being made in all things like unto His brethren, a flesh being, one who ate every word of God and thus became full of grace and truth. That He was full of this bread of heaven, the word of life, is evidenced in that He never spoke His own words but always the words of the Father; therefore He could well be called the Light, the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the "world to come."

Jesus was not in possession of eternal life when in His mortal state. He had only the promise of it, as we are told in I John 2: 25, "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." Being made in all points like His brethren, He with them had only the promise of eternal life; and we can know He did not receive it until He, as our great High Priest, ascended to the Father. We read in John 7: 39, "For the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Would it be reasonable that Jesus should receive the reward before He finished His work? No. He finished the work God gave Him to do before the wicked Jews put Him on the cross; then He could cry as recorded in John 17: 5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"—the "world to come."

In the original language, the word translated "with" is *para*, which means, "Before, in the presence of; often of being heard before a judge." Jesus had the promise of this glory, the reward of eternal life, and now that He had finished the work He asked Almighty God to give it to Him in the Eternal's presence. After the Day of Pentecost and Jesus had sent the Holy Spirit upon the dis-

ciples, Peter testified that the request had been granted: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth that which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2: 32, 33). Jesus had then been glorified and received eternal life.

#### How Was Christ the Firstborn of Every Creature?

He is the "firstborn from the dead, . . . the beginning of the creation of God" (Col. 1: 18; Rev. 3: 14). The first chapter of Colossians is what the theologians rely on as teaching that Christ existed before anyone lived on the earth. But it is as plain as can be when we understand the Truth. He is before "all things" of the new heavens and earth of the "world to come." The first heaven and earth, the people and those ruled over, passed away at the time of the Flood, and the second heavens and earth which are now, shall pass away when God's judgments are in the earth after the second coming of Christ. The ruthless rulers and the wicked people over whom they rule shall pass away with a great noise in the Battle of Armageddon. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3: 4-13). There will be thrones and principalities and powers of that "world to come," and Christ is "before all things" of that world. He is "the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." He is the firstborn to immortality, the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality" of all the Adamic race (I Tim. 6: 15, 16).

"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Before what "all things"? Before all things of the "world to come." Not of the natural creation, but of thrones, dominions, principalities and powers of that new heavens and earth. It will help to understand this subject if we remember the rule in Rom. 4: 17, where Paul quotes what God said to Abraham, "I have made thee a father of many nations" when as yet no member of those nations was in existence, but He was speaking of "those things which be not as though they were." This form of speech is common in the Scriptures. "By him all things consist"—here is the same form of expression being used. The thrones and powers of the "world to come" are not yet made, and will not be until Christ comes and the faithful are changed into His image (II Cor. 3: 18) and the promise in Rev. 3: 21 is fulfilled to His faithful servants: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." The multitudinous Christ is then completed.

"It is a painful fact, but there is no denying it, the masses are the tools of circumstances; thistle-down on the breeze, straw on the river, their course is shaped for them by the currents and eddies of the stream of life; but only in proportion as they are *things*, not men and women. Man was meant to be not the slave, but the master, of circumstances, and in proportion as he recovers his *humanity*, in every sense of the great *obsolete* word,—in proportion as he gets back the spirit of manliness, which is self-sacrifice, affection, loyalty to an idea beyond himself, a God above himself, so far will he rise *above* circumstances, and wield them at his will."



## THE DIVINE WHISPER—DO IT BETTER

UPON completion of a suite to be occupied by royalty, a painter and interior decorator of international fame was approached by a reporter who felt he might have some helpful advice to offer the oncoming generation of painters and decorators. Would he oblige by giving a short sketch of his life?

After a few moments of thought the decorator spoke: "I was quite young when my interest was first aroused. My parents engaged a man to redecorate the old mansion in which we lived. This man was considered by most of the townspeople as a crank and fanatic because of what they considered his overparticular and zealous attitude toward his chosen profession. Nevertheless his apparent enjoyment of his work and the thoroughness with which he executed it, fascinated me. When the time came for me to choose my life's vocation, I went into apprenticeship to the same decorator. I must confess that many times during my apprenticeship I was tempted to give it up for something I considered easier, as I felt I would just never be able to measure up to the standard he demanded of me. Furthermore his demands that the unseen and the seldom-seen places receive the same careful treatment the most conspicuous place in the room was given, seemed to my young mind so unreasonable. (Although I frankly admit now that has been one of the things that have brought me far, fast.) But the sweetest words to ever fall upon my ears were spoken by this same man, when, after his usual careful and critical examination of a job that had been particularly long, trying and exacting, he approached me and laying his hand on my shoulder, said, 'Well done, my son, well done. I could not have done better. That job is one you can be justly proud of.' And to this day, upon completing a job, no matter how enthusiastic my employer's acclaim, I always say to myself, 'Not good enough, not half good enough. You can do better than that.'"

While perfection in anything temporal is a goal that will forever elude mortal man, there is a noble discontent that makes him dissatisfied with anything short of it—there is always something better farther on. Do a good piece of work today and still better tomorrow.

Nowhere should this inner urge be stronger than in the consciousness of self and the realization of our spiritual possibilities. The one dominating aspiration of everyone striving for moral perfection will be the constant desire to pass beyond himself as he now is and become the "more" he feels himself capable of being. Even where a person has settled for some shoddy satisfaction, or into some comfortable rut, the longing is still there, and shows itself in mental depression, irritability and frustration.

We have been given the opportunity of becoming co-decorators with the greatest of all "Decorators," and we find He has prescribed a course that all apprentices must follow continuously, if they would at last win His approval.

While He makes it plain to us that it is very important to get a thorough understanding of the theory of "decorating," yet our salvation lies in putting the knowledge obtained into practice. The most valuable lessons are those extracted from the ordinary daily intercourse with our fellow men. Nothing takes the place of the actual doing to develop the apprentice's skill.

The "tools" to complete the course satisfactorily have also been made available; they are the best that heaven can offer, and if we fail to "redecorate our temple" according to the great Instructor's wishes, we cannot lay the blame on our "tools."

Paul must have deeply realized his need for a personal renovating and a thorough redecoration when he said, "For in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Jesus also spoke of a class who took pride in appearing outwardly beautiful before men, while within they were filthy. Great care must be exercised lest we fall into this same category. To decorate the outside is commendable and necessary, but the command is to be "all glorious within" as well. And as we well know from actual experience, even a beautiful outside loses much of its beauty if upon entering the dwelling is found to be dirty and things in a state of disorder. Our Instructor is a lover of beauty, cleanliness and order; and if upon examination the innermost recesses of our "dwelling" are found to be dirty and in a state of disorder, it will surely bring condemnation upon us. No slipshod work or halfhearted effort will do; we must be in earnest.

The person who will make the fastest progress is the one who, before he goes forth to meet the demands and problems of a long, busy day, takes time to consider the "job" from all angles and asks for the needed help and strength to carry the day's work to a successful finish. And then when night has come, he will be found carefully and critically examining the results of the day's labors. He will be found asking: What was done about that particularly trying problem, evil thoughts? Was there a place where I could have spoken more kindly? Was my sobriety found in a state of good repair when that foolish remark was made? Did the temporal receive more than its share of attention? What about that place where a friend's good fortune tested my envy? Was that bitter feeling I had yesterday still there to discolor all of today's activities? Did someone's sharp tongue stir me?

Whatever the shortcoming may have been, it will never merit the Eternal's approval. If words of commendation are in order, we will not get puffed up, or sit down thinking our trade learned, or our redecorating accomplished. Our good works cannot be for display only on occasions when we think they may be noticed; but our daily work must be such that it merits special notice, and inspires others to follow our "trade" and calling. No matter how fair, medium, or good, the work of the day, we must constantly remind ourselves, "Not good enough, not half good enough. You can do better than that."

He will never let us "go on our own" until we have proved we are capable of it by a perfectly turned out "redecorating job" on ourselves. If we cannot be trusted to do the right thing in that which concerns and is so vitally important to ourselves, how could He trust us with His property?

It takes a lifetime of the most earnest work to complete this redecorating, for each day brings with it problems and difficulties old and new to be faced and overcome. The way many times seems long and the difficulties to be overcome insurmountable; but a steady keeping on will at last bring its reward.

Forgotten will be that long, trying and exacting ordeal of making ourselves over into fit dwelling places for royal occupancy when that great Decorator places His hand on our shoulder and says, "Well done, my son, well done. That is a job you can be justly proud of. I now extend to you the invitation to be one of my co-decorators of the measureless expanses of my Universe." And as we go from glory to glory, gaining in strength, growing in knowledge, we shall be eternally thankful that we listened to the divine whisper—Do it better.



## DISTILLED POWER

**POWER**—what a potent word that is! How it suggests force, vigor, strength, might, dynamic energy. Upon thinking of power, the mind immediately reflects upon ability, whether physical, mental or moral. It suggests the faculty of doing or performing something.

To blast the side of a hill or through a hill, as often is done in highway construction, the explosive power of dynamite or a substitute is employed. Its violent force removes perhaps many tons of rock in an instant. To remove those same tons of blasted rock that the construction may progress further, other power is used. The great arms of a mighty crane or derrick swing back and forth, lifting away the enormous loads which the gigantic jaws of the power shovel "bites" up. Such is the motor power of modern gasoline and the engines it drives.

This power has largely replaced the power of men and muscle together with that of brute force of animals, as horses and oxen of former generations when mechanical power was unknown.

Then there is the power of electricity that drives the wheels of commerce and industry and which is the heart and lungs of modern civilization.

There is water power, that with its thundering force drives the most immense turbines, or in its persistent, steady coursing wears away not only the proverbial stone but the mountain. The famous Delaware Water Gap is perhaps an outstanding example, where in bygone ages water power has cut its patient way some 1,500 feet down, down through the rock formation, cleaving the mountain in twain, as it were.

There is the uncomprehended power of the atom, of which we hear so much in these fear-filled days when the terrific and destructive power of the hydrogen bomb holds nations in dread of its use.

There is the power of the written word and of speech by which nations have been swayed, or great enterprises set in motion.

There is the power of human emotions, feelings of good or ill that have contributed to the building or destruction of empires.

Expanding our mind upon the subject of power, in whatever direction we may, it appears that everywhere we look, everything we think of, exerts power of some degree, whether tangible or intangible, for good or ill. Indeed I find it much too vast a subject for my small ability.

However, the power specified in the subject of this paper is distilled power—the Power of God's Word—the living Truth. That is the essence, the concentrate of force and might to work upon, to change and shape that which is at once most obdurate and most subtle, the most stolid and elusive—the human character. By the distilled power of Truth, men become regenerated, made over into new creatures. That which is weak becomes strong. Inherent evils are transformed into heavenly virtues; corrupt and corruptible man is purified and made worthy of incorruptibility; that which is so inglorious becomes worthy of divinest glory.

That distilled power of Truth at work in the human mind tames the tongue—a gigantic accomplishment which man with all other powers at his control could never do. That power elevates the thoughts from the dust level to heaven, an achievement which the mightiest hydraulic lift could not touch.

Consider the distilled power, the intense strength, of those first two commandments: To love God with all our heart, soul and mind, and "thy neighbor as thyself." So mighty, so full of power are they that on these two commands hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Think of the force, the concentrated essence, the stupendous power locked within that short command, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Seven words! But they have arrested the gaze of some hundred million persons and held the fixed and steady attention of that choice but lesser number of the overcomers. This earnest host planted these potent words in their hearts and minds where their power is unlocked and their prodigious energy released to blast away, in repeated operations, every lurking fiber of evil and radiate the innermost recesses of the soul with divine virtue.

At the great white Throne of Judgment and final decision, 144,000 perfected characters shall stand in glittering array as the finished and finest examples of the distilled power of Divine law.

All the various classifications and kinds of power at human disposal effect but temporal results, but the distilled power of Truth performs that which shall be worthy of perpetuation—perfected human character.

All the powers of earth, man-created or man-harnessed, shall fade and fail; and at the Word of the Eternal the very mountains could be leveled into the sea, the waters even of the raging torrent of Niagara be made still pools—or more, dried up if so He willed—but the distilled power, the Gospel, the Word of the Lord, endureth forever and is the power of God unto salvation. Yes, Israel, that people who yielded to its power, "shall be saved with an everlasting salvation." The Eternal Himself has promised, nor will He change His decree.

## LOSE THE DAY LOITERING

Lose the day loitering, 'twill be the same story  
Tomorrow; and the next more dilatory.  
For indecision brings its own delays;  
And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days.

Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute;  
What you can do, or think you can, begin it!  
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated;  
Begin it, and the work will be completed. —Sel.

## THE NEGLECTED BOOK

And in their home there is a Book  
With pages seldom turned,  
Whose messages of truth and hope  
Are still by them unlearned:  
The Book that tells of Him who came  
To earth that we might know  
The beauty of a sinless life,  
Lived here so long ago.

'Tis said they do not really know  
This Man of Galilee,  
Who healed the lame, the blind, the deaf,  
Beside the sapphire sea;  
And still they read, and laugh, and cry  
O'er stories of the hour,  
And let the Book, dust-covered, lie  
Unopened in its power. —Sel.

## Meditations on the Word

*"Thus he showed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people" (Amos 7:7, 8).*

The device known as a plumbline is a cord attached to a pointed weight or plumb-bob, the weight being sufficiently heavy that when suspended by the cord it will indicate true perpendicular by the pull of gravity exerted upon the weight. Up until a hundred or so years ago the plumbline was the only instrument available to masons for truing up masonry walls or tall chimneys, or to carpenters in erecting frame structures. The modern spirit level has largely replaced the plumbline due to its compactness and convenience; however, it cannot compete with its ancestor for accuracy. The plumbline is especially useful to indicate a point on the ceiling of a high room directly above a given point on the floor.

Lead being the heaviest metal known to the ancients, they naturally used that metal to make the plumb-bob, or weight suspended from the cord of the plumbline. The Latin word for lead is *plumbum*, and from this Latin word came the term plumbline.

We may wonder why the Lord when informing Amos of His unswerving demand for integrity and righteousness should have employed the simile of the plumbline. The answer is, its accuracy. Anyone familiar with the law of gravity knows that all existing substances possessing weight are attracted to the earth by this law, and the earth's center is the point of attraction. Hence gravity pulls the plumb-bob so the plumbline is aligned with the exact center of the earth. It always comes to rest at an invisible yet real location, and it cannot deviate. The unalterable divine standard of holiness answers to this center of gravity; the plumbline is drawn to this never-deviating focal point, and every constructed wall worthy of acceptance at the hand of the Master Builder must pass the test of the plumbline.

The demand of divine law is the plumbline which must differentiate between what is right and what is wrong in God's sight. By employing this instrument we can see where we are leading away from the goodness and integrity of which God made us capable, and which He demands. Naturally we yearn for a more flexible standard by which to gauge our actions; we should like a little more leeway in the building of our wall of character; we prefer not to be held so rigidly to the plumbline. But there can be no alternative. God's building must be absolutely straight and true, else it could not be the product of an infinite Being. If any lowered standard were permitted, there could be no limit to the imperfections that would have to be allowed. If left to ourselves, our wall of character would be so crooked that it might compare favorably with the leaning tower of Pisa, which has become famous by being "out of plumb."

It is assuring to observe that Amos saw the Lord standing upon a wall made by a plumbline, which is just another way of saying that the Lord Himself is always on the square in His relations with His human children. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." "For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth" (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 33:4).

He demands of us nothing unreasonable or unfair; He is no "respector of persons," but only of character, and by Him "actions are weighed." There is "no iniquity with the Lord our God, . . . nor taking of gifts" (Acts 10:34; I Sam. 2:3; II Chron. 19:7). Therefore standing upon His reputation for absolute fairness and justice in dealing, He applies His plumbline, demanding a perfect character of all who offer themselves as potential material for the spiritual temple He is building.

Now let us evaluate the varying types of human behavior by this plumbline. How shall we proceed to build so that our building will be tall and straight and true? The Bible or law of God gives specific commands to cover each situation that may arise. As the thought is the controlling factor behind every conscious act, let us begin with commands on right thinking.

The Apostle Paul moved Christians by his forceful words, and in Phil. 4:8 he gives some straight advice on right thinking: "Whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Thinking on the things that are lovely and of good report will restrict our thought to the area of helpfulness for others, thankfulness for blessings received, appreciation for favors shown, reports on the good deeds of others, a willingness to share our plenty with the less fortunate, and above all meditating upon and delighting always in the law of God. Second Corinthians 10:5 seems to cover the thought situation completely: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

It has been said that the tip of the tongue is the world's most dangerous point, hence the need for its control is obvious. Many times we may echo—in thought if not audibly—the challenge of the proud, haughty sinner, "My tongue is my own, who is lord over me?" The Psalmist showed himself alert to the need for a controlling medium, when he said: "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me" (Ps. 39:1). The bridle and the plumbline are identical as restraints in deterring our tongues from speaking sinful words and training them to speak right words. Peter also gave a safe rule to govern our speaking: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). If we apply this plumbline to our speech, much that is ordinarily spoken will be left unsaid, and every sentence uttered obliged to pass this rigid test: Is it true? is it constructive? can I say it to God's glory?

We are building every day, building for eternity. Every act of our daily life places a stone into the wall of our building. Only repeated good acts can construct a wall that will reveal no flaw when tested by the plumbline. Good works are works that God calls good, not works that may seem good to us. Deuteronomy 10:12 covers all briefly: "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." And in one trenchant statement Paul gives the formula for the righteous life: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). And the plumbline has such a restraining influence upon these builders for eternity that they never allow themselves to act as they naturally would act: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."



## ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

A subscriber at Montreal, Que., Can., writes gratefully. "Dear Megiddo Friends: I want to thank you so much for sending me visitors. I was so surprised, but I did appreciate them very much. So very nice of you to remember me! They were lovely subjects to talk to; I really was delighted. I thank you so much. They said they were going to England. I do hope God will give them a pleasant journey across the sea.

"I may say the lessons on the Heaven and Earth of Genesis are so inspiring. Wishing you all God's blessings. Sincerely, Mrs. M. H—."

From Qulin, Mo., is a kind expression and renewal of MESSAGE.

"Dear Megiddo Friends in Christ: Wishing all at the Mission God's love and blessings. Yes, I surely would love to have been with you good people for the Lord's birthday and the Passover.

"Please find enclosed enough to keep the MESSAGE paper coming to my home, for it surely is genuine bread and water for the hungry soul, and I want nothing but the whole truth. Jesus said: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'

"Thanks to every one for the nice letters to me; they are soul lifters. God bless all the Mission family.

Mrs. V— W—."

A brother at Listowel, Ont., Can., renews his subscription, and is especially pleased to have it to read during his convalescence. He says:

"Dear Friends of THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE: I wish you very much success in your work. I look forward for the paper each time and enjoy reading it. It is almost as good as reading the Bible. It is just as good, because it is taken out of the Bible and explained; I think so very much of it that I get lonesome without it.

From your friend, J— S—."

This thoughtful letter is from a sister at Adamsville, Tenn.

"Dear Sister: . . . We hear many times of people being sentenced to die, but I had never thought about a person being sentenced to *live*. But I guess that if one is trying to follow Christ there will be times when it will be like being sentenced. In fact there might be times when doing the right thing was so hard that death would be preferable. Death would soon be over, but life goes on, with perhaps pretty much the same tasks and same worries day after day until we are likely to grow tired of it, and wonder why there can't be a change.

"Sentenced to live; but live how? A *living* sacrifice instead of a dead one—a wonderful thought!

Your sister, Mrs. J— P—."

Our junior correspondents are doing well with reports on their Bible lessons. The following is from a young girl at Bright, Ont., Can., neatly written, and with a drawing representing Jesus feeding the multitude.

"Dear R—: . . . The last lesson I learned was a general review of Jesus' life, teaching and followers. One part was about Jesus in a desert place with the disciples and a multitude at evening. . . . Imagine that! Twelve full baskets from only five loaves and two fish, after five thousand men besides women and children were fed. This indeed shows a supernatural power of God. . . .

With Christian love, E— E. B—."

## BEYOND MOTH, RUST AND ROBBER

(Continued from page 2)

are beyond the moths of mortality, adversity, the evil designs of man, where the rust and ravages of time cannot destroy; where no force or influence can rob us of that which we have desired and labored to obtain?

The value of these heavenly riches is difficult to describe fully and is beyond human computation. To store them means to live a godly life in word, in thought, in deed. The interest on these riches we draw daily, increasing with the amount we deposit. We need to dwell on larger things, think in larger terms and longer times than the fleeting present.

To lay up heavenly treasure begins in the mind.

"It is within the blossom blows,  
Yes, from bud expands the rose;  
And from within the warm earth yields  
All of the splendor of the fields.

"And what shall make us wise or great?  
Our inner selves or outer fate?  
What chains we wear or titles win,  
*The things we are, we are within.*"

Indeed, no man is common who thinks uncommon thoughts; nor can he who stores mental riches of truth be a poor man. *As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, says the Word of God.*

The Apostle Paul and Silas showed the value of heavenly riches in their experience in prison. Did they not sing hymns through the dark hours? How could they draw strength and cheer in song from their mind unless they had first stored it there?

We too can store in our memory a thousand treasures safe from any destroying force or influence. Not just words—no, no—but so write God's commandments, His glorious promises, all the evidence we have of His wonderful attributes of goodness, justice, mercy, wisdom, might and power as revealed over and over in His Word and in our own lives, until they become a living part of us in all we think and do and say. The accumulation of this fortune of righteousness, riches of the heart and life, will enable us to live on Hallelujah Boulevard with servants of patience, meekness, temperance and every virtue to serve us with life's richest blessings in heavenly places.

Besides bringing comfort and peace now, above all, these heavenly treasures will enable us to pay the first mortgage that Death holds against every mortal house, lest he foreclose and claim our house forever. "The ransom of a man's life are his riches" (Prov. 13:8). God said through Paul the Apostle, "Be rich in good works, . . . amassing right good treasure for themselves in the world to come, in order to secure the life which is life indeed" (I Tim. 6:19, Moffatt).

There alone lies security—beyond the reach of moth, rust and robber.

"Why do we call some men saints? Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful, and patient when it was difficult to be patient, and because they pressed ahead when they wanted to stand still, and kept silent when they wanted to talk, and were agreeable when they wanted to be disagreeable. That was it. It was quite simple, and always will be."

## THE CROWN OF LIFE

Whene'er a crown is mentioned  
We think of kings and queens,  
Of royal coronations  
Amid resplendent scenes.  
But we need not be an heir  
To any earthly throne  
To receive the crown of glory  
Jesus gives unto His own.

This crown of life is laid aside  
For faithful ones and true.  
Mention has been made of it  
In the Testaments, Old and New.  
Second Timothy, four and eight,  
Records Paul's words of cheer.  
And in Revelation, two and ten,  
The promise is made clear.

In First Peter, five and four,  
We read of "crown of glory";  
The twelfth verse of James one  
Repeats this wondrous story.  
But behind it runs a drama  
Of sacrifice and scorn;  
We see a cross of self-restraint  
If we'd be Spirit born.

An everlasting crown of life  
Our Saviour holds in store;  
And in Luke nine and twenty-three  
Is cross He *daily* bore.  
True, all who make this sacrifice  
An endless life receive;  
And following Jesus' footsteps  
Is really to believe.

—V. E. McN— (alt.)